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A Triennium of War's Brutalism and Debauchery.

The bottom has at last fallen out of the policy of concealment and denial, and all the heartless deeds done during three years in the Philippines lie revealed in a hideous mass before all eyes. Much has been known all along, by all who were willing to know; but now everybody must know. Concealment and denial are no longer possible. Men who hesitated to say anything while the star-chamber policy of suppression and giving the lie to accusing witnesses was on, have hastened by dozens to confirm the stories of water-torture, village burning, and butchery of unarmed Filipinos that had been filtering through from the first.

Even the Government, the War Department, the Senate Committee on the Philippines, the Taft Commission, the war party in Congress and among the people, the fire-eating newspapers, have found out at last that something base and inhuman has been taking place under American authority and American patronage. Senator Lodge's "patriotic" fears have been more than realized; our Philippine policy has got "above ground," out of his secret committee room, and it "smells to heaven," as he said it would.

It is an appalling revelation. What is the lesson of it all? There are many minor ones, but the main lesson is that war is still the same ancient and immemorial hell; that it is cruelty and in its essential nature cannot be humanized; that it cannot be engaged in without moral degradation and besmirchment; that it lets loose and stimulates the bestial passions; that it makes men bloodthirsty, callous, cruel, vengeful, lustful; that it breaks down regard for the liberties, rights and lives of others; that it develops the spirit of lying and deceit in the field, of mental dishonesty and sophistry among its supporters at home; that it is doubly corrupting and dehumanizing when employed by a strong, professedly civilized people in aggression against one that is undeveloped and weak.

That war is all this, and much more, is the great lesson of these revelations. How many of our countrymen will take it to heart? Who will cry out against war itself as the guilty thing? There has been and will be plenty of condemnation of the men and officers who have, under orders or without orders, wantonly violated the so-called "laws of war," and turned themselves into brutal savages. The guilty parties are all running to cover. Each is trying to clear himself by the plea of "necessity" or by laying the blame on others. The courts-martial which have been ordered — and serious courts-martial themselves are only one of the inhuman phases of war — are almost sure to be mere cloaks for concealing the guilty forms of those who are the real culprits — those who brought on the war and have insisted that it be prosecuted "vigorously;" those who have turned loose and urged on its cruel passions and practices. They themselves will escape,— possibly by getting a few men shot, or imprisoned, or dismissed from the service and disgraced,— and they will thus convince themselves that they are kind and humane men, that war is a holy and clean thing, that this particular war, which has wantonly destroyed one-third of the population of one province and turned parts of the islands into a "howling wilderness," has been a just and benign instrument of the merciful God in extending his kingdom of righteousness, love, and goodwill! Oh that our countrymen might see the unfathomable shame and horror of the whole thing!

If any country ought to be able to wage a "civil-